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*This copy is Number 151*





# American Bookbindings







Early American Binding.

YALE  
UNIVERSITY  
LIBRARY

6

# American Bookbindings in the Library of Henry William Poor

*Described by Henri Pène du Bois*

Illustrated in Gold-leaf and Colors by  
Edward Bierstadt

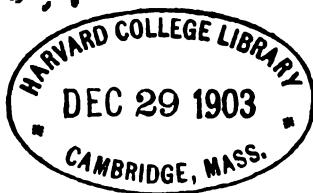


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Copyright, 1903, by George D. Smith

*To*

**The Grolier Club**

*This book, written in admiration for the work that  
the Grolier Club has done, is dedicated with  
sentiments of great respect and  
profound affection*



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## **American Bookbindings**



## I

*Love of Books*

A set phrase of the ages is that books are too many. It comes to us from the Hittites by the cross-roads of folk-lore. Of every epoch it assumes the air of being characteristic. The sages lament it. What a jeremiad! “The men of other times were better than those of to-day!” exclaims Homer. “I come to you with ideas inspired by the green fields of nature, and not by the green cloth of library tables,” says Bismarck. “Books are the opium of the West,” says a moralist of to-day, reflecting that the time when men did not know how to read was when they achieved the greatest deeds.

Oh, it is salutary to agree with this! We are inclined to live too much among books and not enough in nature. We are in the peril constantly of resembling Pliny the

Younger, who studied a Greek orator while, under his eyes, the Vesuvius buried five cities in ashes. There are bookish minds for whom the universe is only ink-and-paper. The men that have such minds are heedless of the realities, the graphic representation of which they study obstinately. They know of the beauty of women only what has been written. They know of the labors, the sufferings, and the hopes of men only what may be bound in morocco. They are monstrous and innocent.

A superstition dominates them. It is as crazy as that of the old Scandinavians that wrote in Runic characters and imagined that there are words powerful enough, if they were ever uttered, to extinguish the sun and reduce the earth to powder. It makes them imagine that a nation is learned when all the persons in it know the same things,—as if diversity of functions did not entail diversity of know-

ledge, and as if it were profitable for a merchant to know what a physician knows. It advises all men to collect books. But book-collecting is an art, and one must put in it the passion and the pleasure without which there is no art.

Love of books is truly laudable. The booklovers lend themselves to raillery as other lovers do; but they are to be envied, since they ornament their lives with a long and peaceful voluptuousness. Do you think that you may confound them by saying that they do not read their books? Béraldi replied without embarrassment to that charge, “Do you eat from your Chinese roseback eggshell plates?” They are protected from utility by beauty of form. Nothing lasts save beauty of form. May one conceive of it independently of time and of space? Are works of the mind sufficient unto themselves?

Works of the mind charm only at the moment when one sees their point of contact with life. The coarse pottery of Hissarlik makes one love the Iliad better, and the Divine Comedy of Dante is more agreeable to one who knows the Florentine life of the thirteenth century. Goethe said a profound thing: "The only durable works are those that circumstances provoked." There are no others. All depend on the place and the moment when they were created. One may not understand nor love them intelligently who may not know the time and the circumstances of their origin. The most lovable have value only by their relations with life.

The better understood are these relations, the more lovable are the works. They are too many at all times and in all countries, but few of them subsist for a long period, and in a cycle all vanish to be replaced by

one which has beauty of form. It is the Book of the Dead in Egypt, the Iliad in Greece, the Bible in Judea, Beowulf and the Chanson de Roland in the modern epic epochs. Doubtless these books in their work of elimination have caused to disappear valuable fragments of Egypt, Greece, Judea, old England, and Gaul. But archæologists retrieve them from descriptions of libraries of artlovers. And it is for the archæologists of the future that I wish to write these notes of Henry W. Poor's library.

It is not numerous; it has quality. It is not indifferent to nature; its elements are of life, and they were gathered by one eminent in the activity of it. The books are not to teach, and their motive is not utility but æsthetic expression. They have beauty of form in their style and relation to life in their art. They are first editions of American authors, special editions of works val-

ued highly by American booklovers. With them one has the taste, the manner, and the critical discernment of the American artisans of to-day. These are reflected in Mr. Poor's library acutely.

It is, I think, a captivating reflection. It will be improved or changed. All things change. Motion is life, or, at least, all that we see of life. The figure of humanity is never twice the same. But we resemble our fathers more than we believe, often more than we wish. It is very delicate to mark the points of similarity and of unlikeness that make us near to them or far from them. The temptation to exaggerate both is almost irresistible. One says, "This is an expression of to-day," and nine times in ten the thing that was regarded as novel is in reality as old as the world. We know our own times badly and other times not at all. We judge them according to our sentiments.

## *Care of Books*

Books fall soon into lamentable ruins if they be not bound. The printer that copied in his font the calligraphy of Godefalcus or that of Petrarch, in the days when the art of printing with movable types was new, was a bookbinder also. The book was, when it came out of his shop, complete. It had its oak or pigskin covers, with metal corners, bosses, or clasps. It had its title and designs made appropriate if not always emblematical. The work had the order, the measure, and the proportion of works accomplished with heart and art and intended to be in their first form forever. Now the printer is not the bookbinder. They do not know each other or they are at cross-purposes.

The printer's sheets fall under the bookbinder's knife. He cuts them to fit cloth or

morocco cases which he has made for them in advance. He is free of fidelity to their text as well as to the shape that the printer has given to them. The emblematic design that he places on the covers of a bookbinding may shock the buyer of the book, its printer, and its author. The bookbinder is heedless of that. His work is independent and contradictory. The idea that the covers of a book must be as if they were made with it is unknown to him.

Grolier caused this idea to be realized integrally. The covers of the books that were bound for him fit exactly. One has to admire the curves of their edges that, pinched at the ends, seem to inclose the text with absolute safety. But the geometrical lines of the interlacings, the arabesques, and the device that he used were applied indiscriminately to all his books. One may not know from the designs on their covers if they be missals or

rules of behavior for courtiers. Neither he, nor Canevarius, nor Diane de Poitiers, nor any other booklover until recently in America followed the example of the printer-bookbinder of the Mentz Bible and the Nuremberg Chronicle.

If this be not important, nothing is. The care of books, anxiety that they should have the beauty of form that is indispensable to their distinction, exact that their art be complete. The covers of books must be emblematic of their text. The art of designing book-covers that was made traditional for centuries consisted in the use of lines and flowers of Eve, Le Gascon, Padeloup, Derome, Roger Payne, named for their inventors and expressive of nothing except fashions in ornament. Booklovers had no part in them. At a time when book-collecting in France raged furiously, Trautz-Bauzonnet, the greatest of bookbinders in mosaic, applied the same

covers indifferently to prayer-books and to philosophical essays.

Where was the charm of individuality that is all the charm of art? In the modern booklover's library the expression of the books in their bindings reflects not only the text of their authors but the booklover's impression of the text, his criticism of it, and the place that he ascribes to the work in his appreciation of literature or bibliomania. The modern booklover's library is an opportunity to display the rarest, the most diverse, the most varied intellectual faculties. Thus it is the most recent of all literary forms. And it may not fail to absorb them. It becomes admirably a civilized society with rich reminiscences and long traditions.

It is particularly appropriate to a humanity curious, learned, and polished. To prosper it presupposes extraordinary culture. It proceeds from history and from philosophy. It is de-

veloped in entire liberty. The booklover's library takes out of the literature of the ages its gems. Its owner, presenting it, may say with the fervor of Gladstone, "Here are eloquence, philosophy, history, letters, all the styles of literature, including art of criticism which summarizes them all." Art of criticism is individual, as all art is; but it has a great chance to be almost exact when the artist in it is a booklover.

A Russian magician who has lived for a long time in India has written of a process used by the sage Hindoos to communicate their thoughts to the profane. As soon as their thoughts are formed they precipitate them into the brains of a saintly man who writes them at his leisure. That process is useful, but it is not necessary to the booklover. The books of his library, in their artistic bindings of to-day, are his precipitated thoughts.

### III

## *Fate of Books*

If the booklover's individuality be imperious his library is above the faults of imitation and prejudice. The usual critic lauds only Aristophanes, while Pomponius Atticus the booklover elevates one hundred and thirty-two other Greek poets, including Alexis, Philetarios, Strattis, and Cratinos. The usual critic knows seven tragedies of Æschylus and the booklover seventy. To know books nothing is as efficient as to love them. The taste that favors one work and censures another is formed usually by circumstances foreign to their text. Imitators adhere. A book accepted at its birth by a great number of persons retains its reputation for a long time after it has become unintelligible. A book disdained at its first appearance has little chance to please ever.

It has no chance at all save by the individuality of the booklover. He has no reason not to be sincere; he has the ambition to be free; he is under the natural obligation to be agreeable to himself only. An admirable study is of the variations of criticism of works that have preoccupied humanity in the ages. *Hamlet*, the *Divine Comedy*, the *Iliad*, were praised at different epochs for different reasons. Homer charms to-day because of primitive and barbarous characteristics recently discovered in him. Two hundred years ago he was praised for having observed the most exquisite rules of epic poetry imaginable. This is ridiculous, but is our point of view more reasonable?

Surely we may not hope to place in the class of eternal truths the idea that Homer is barbarous and that a barbarian is charming. But there is not an opinion in literature which may not be fought easily by another

opinion. The task of the booklover is to reconcile all apparent contradictions. His library may prove that the works that have the best chance to be loved through the ages are those that lend themselves most easily to various interpretations. They say one thing to the educated and another to the untrained. They seem to be symbolical to the mystic and scientific to the students of natural philosophy.

They are mysterious and therefore captivating. Above all things they have beauty of form. They are individual, since all art is individual. And they form themselves into a collection the aspect of which is individual. Consult the greatest booklovers, those who gather incunabula, humble monuments of the xylography of the fifteenth century, book-bindings made for Henri II and Diane de Poitiers, first editions of works of the Elizabethan era, first editions of modern poets to

be bound in luxury, and you will observe that their minds are reflected and expressed also in their books. Consult the most humble booklovers, those who have not the money to pay for the books that they want when their value is known, and observe that they are as implacably critical.

To form a library that will invest one with the right to be known as a booklover, one has to express preferences. I have always thought that no one made masterpieces,—that this is a task superior to individuals whosoever they may be,—but that the happiest mortals produce at times works which may become masterpieces by the aid of the booklover. He takes little interest in the technical conditions under which novels and poems are elaborated. He believes that these conditions are interesting to their writers only. Each one of them imagines that he has the secret of his trade exclusively. The book-

lover believes that those who write master-pieces do not know what they are doing; that their situation as benefactors is full of innocence.

What is the value to the booklover of his library? To inspire in him sage reflections, conversations grave and familiar, long day-dreams, a vague and light curiosity attached to all things without pretension to exhaust anything, the reminiscence of cherished ideals, oblivion of commonplace cares. His books become a part of him. He selected them because his mind, his taste, his hopes and fears were reflected in them. They reflect themselves in him in their turn. He puts himself into them; they make him think and love. And the chronicler having to give an emblematic figure to an epoch can do nothing better than describe the booklover's library. In it are his culture and the civilization of his age.









Lining, *Manual of Bookbinding.*

*Books in Eden*

One is born a booklover. The aptitude that this implies is not all mental inclination. It is also a nervous aspect. The booklover has the æsthetic sense at the tips of his fingers. They are receptive of art-impressions as well as his eyes. Grain of crushed levant-morocco, woof of stuffs, tapestry, enamel of vases, figurines, medals, are necessary to the sensitiveness of his touch. To satisfy it one bends over water, plucks lilies, then algæ, then submarine rarities. Little by little one has made a vast pastel painted with powder of coral, earth of minerals crushed, dust of wings of butterflies. It is inevitable that the booklover's library should evoke that fantasy. The covers of Mr. Poor's books give intensely the impression of its reality.

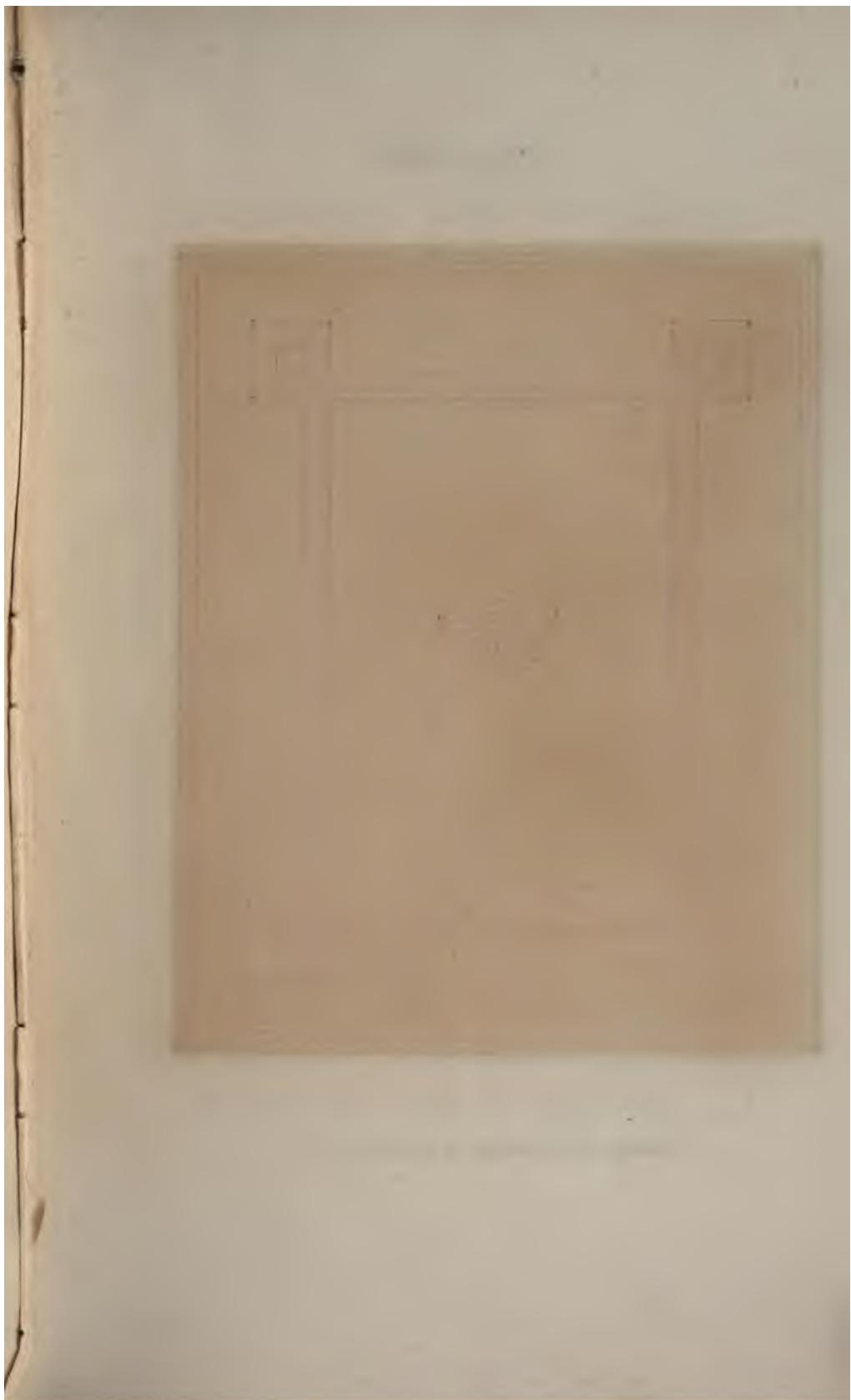
James B. Nicholson's *A Manual of the Art of Bookbinding*, Philadelphia, 1856, was bound by himself. The binding is black, slight, with gilt interlaced lines forming squares at the corners and Zs at the two sides of the board. The lining is of orange calf bordered with red and gilt. The model of the work was English. Its illustrations are, oddly, marbled-papers and prints in black of the brass tools that served in the bookbinder's shop for imitations of styles used in England—the Montague, the Harleian, the Aldine, the old German, the Gothic, the Monastic. They were not the styles that were to captivate American booklovers.

The preference of the American booklovers was expressed aptly by Robert Hoe in a lecture illustrated with lantern-slides of bookcovers at the Grolier Club in February 1885. The pictures were of books of his library. I remember that the wicked smiled



Bound by R. W. Smith; finished by F. Mansell,







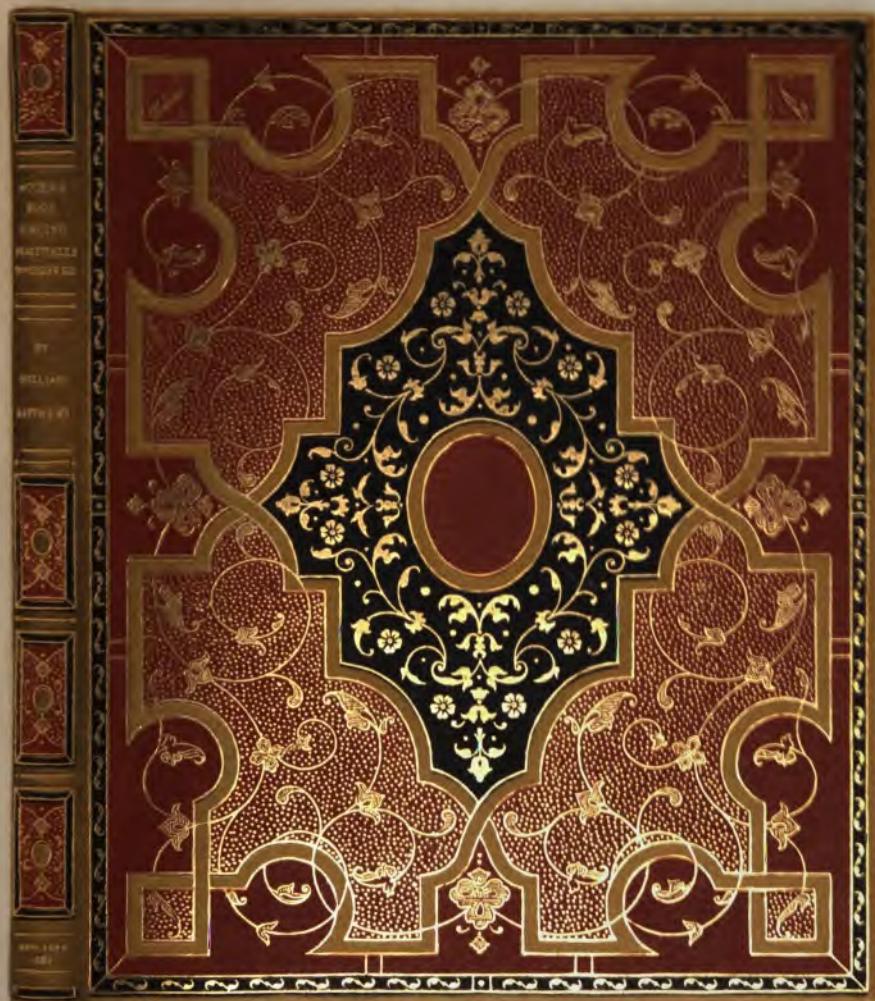
*Lining, Bookbinding as a Fine Art.*

at a phrase of the lecture which said, "The books of the best binders are artistic, as the violins of the Cremonas and Stradellas with their beautiful form and workmanship and fine quality, or the skilful productions of a Cellini or a Limoges enameler, are artistic." Of course Mr. Hoe knows that Cremona is a town and that Cellini was a man; but the phrase that seems to deny that knowledge appears as it was spoken, when the wicked smiled, in the book that the Grolier Club has made of the lecture.

The merit of *Bookbinding as a Fine Art* is not affected by that accident. The work's merit is in the clearness of its review of the classic models that Mr. Hoe admired. There is the most fastidious American booklover's taste in 1885 defined. The binding, forwarded by R. W. Smith and finished by F. Mansell, is in blue with a border of eight gilt lines, lined with red edged with three

gilt lines and a frame of five lines around Grolier's arms in gilt.

The same artists gave to the book that the Grolier Club made of William Matthews's lecture in March 1885 on *Modern Book-binding Practically Considered* a more complicated expression. The covers are in red, with orange arabesques of the Grolier fashion and gilt dots of Le Gascon's fancy around a geometrical figure in black inlaid with a red medallion encircled in orange. The lining is in red, inlaid with an oblong of orange and bordered by gilt lines curved at the corners. The back is in panels of yellow and red inlaid and gilt dots. The text is, as was the artist's lecture, persuasive. He had, in delivering it to an audience of booklovers and publishers, the force of one who had suffered long from their lighthearted exactions. They gave to him bundles of paper heavy and curling at the edges and insisted that he should



Bound by R. W. Smith; finished by F. Mansell.





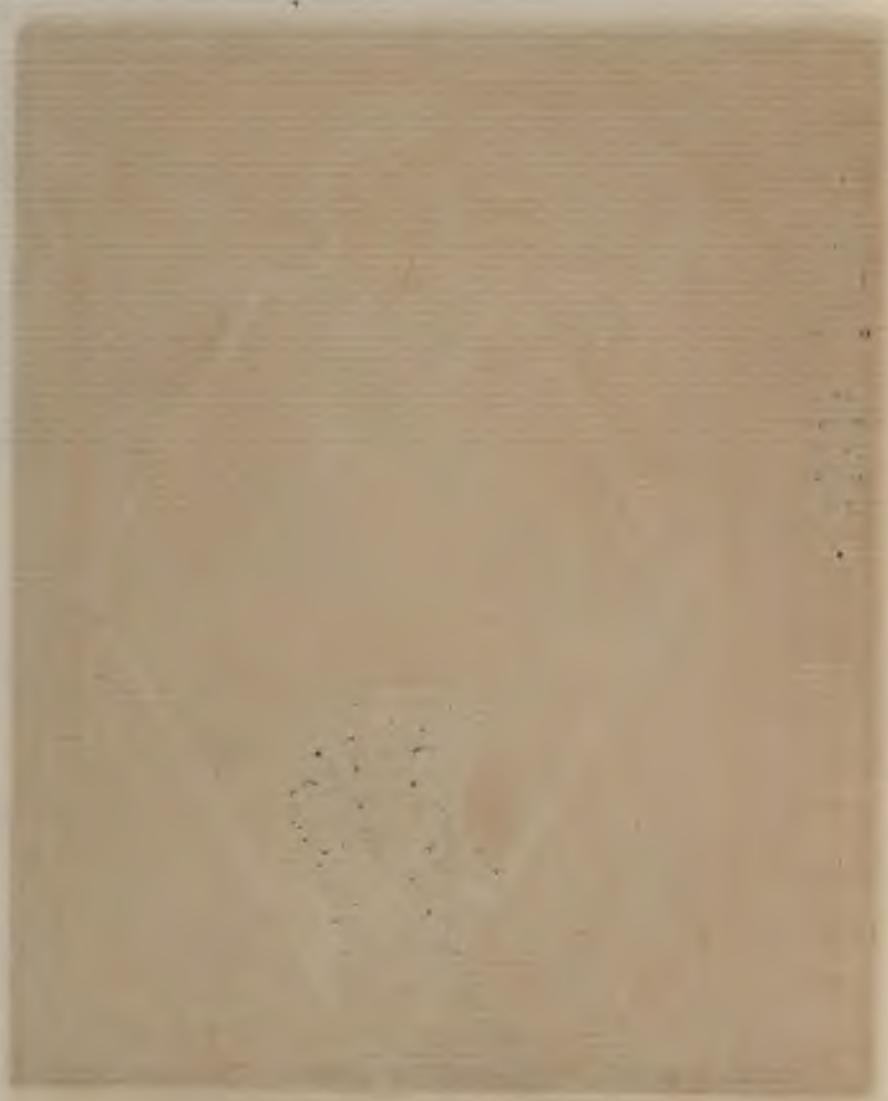


*Lining, Historic and Artistic Bookbindings.*

make of them books that would open easily and stay flat at any page.

The album of *One Hundred and Seventy-six Historic and Artistic Bookbindings dating from the Fifteenth Century to the Present Time*, taken from examples in the library of Robert Hoe and published in 1895 in two volumes, is bound in black with heavily gilt scrolls, flowers, and lines, ornamented with the monogram of Henry William Poor at the four corners of a frame of gilt lines. It is lined in red with a border of gilt lines and scrolls. The work was forwarded by the Club Bindery and finished by Léon Maillard.

The same artists made the binding of Rosina Filippi's *Three Japanese Plays for Children*, printed by Daniel of Oxford in 1897. The covers are in blue with a border of four orange bamboo-rods around a vase blue, red, gilt, and orange filled with three chrysanthemums orange, pink, and white and their



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Bound by the Club Bindery.







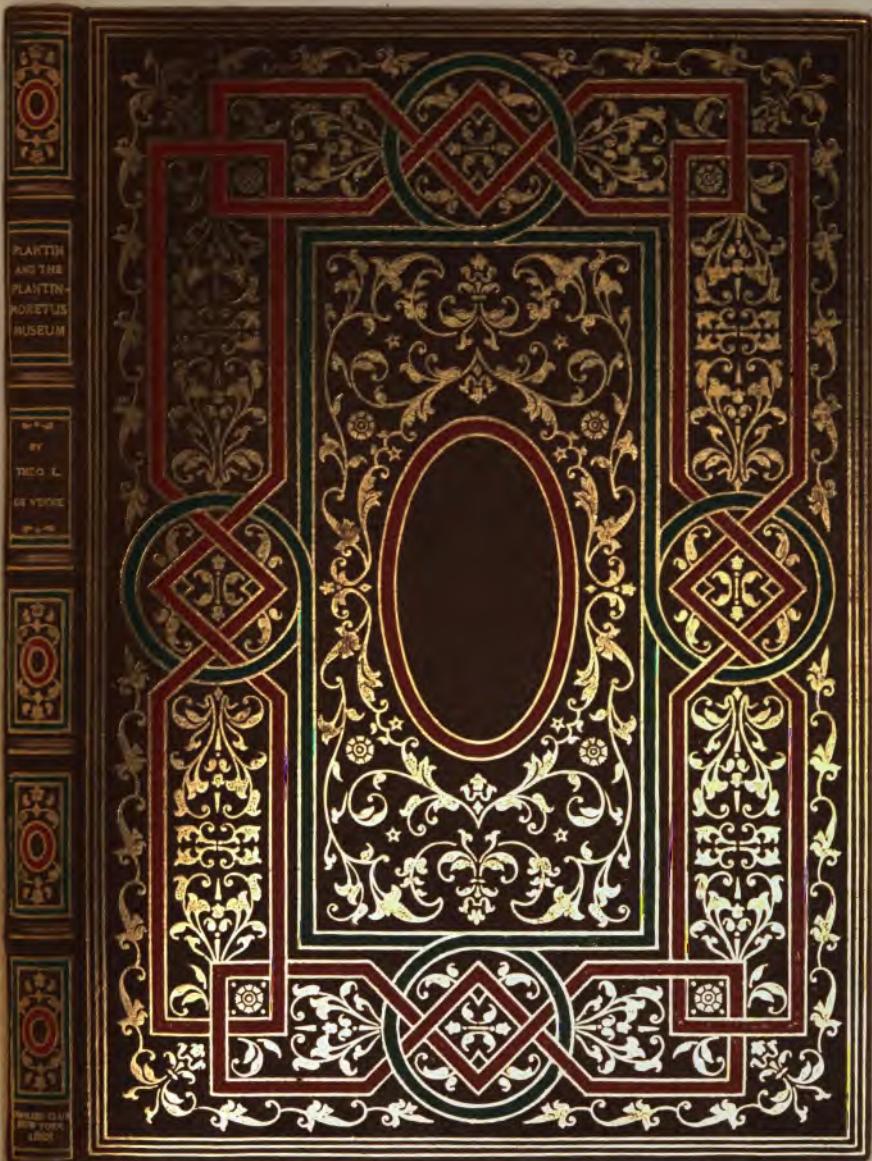
Lining, *Library of Robert Hoe.*

flowers. The design is complicated, but so is the text. It describes manuscripts, missals, Books of Hours, incunabula, books with vignettes of the eighteenth century in France, and nothing can be surer of assent than the learned author's theory—"In conclusion, it may safely be asserted that this library is to America what the Bibliotheca Spenceriana is to England and the collection of the Duke d'Aumale to France."

If one observe that Mr. Hoe's library takes much space in the books of Mr. Poor, one may be asked to admit that this is in conformity with laws of order, measure, and proportion, since Mr. Hoe's library is an obsession to all booklovers. They know that it was formed in the days when Samuel Latham Mitchill Barlow's collection of Americana cast a shadow. In it one could cultivate at liberty love of beautiful forms and colors. They were not Mr. Barlow's object. They

were not aims of his friends. They wanted of books that they should be Americana and scarce. Mr. Hoe had few rivals in the insistence that they should be, above all things, beautiful. And the faculty to be always in the fashion, to captivate interest at all times, to attract the favor of all the varieties of minds, is the faculty of the beautiful, evidently.

Court it wherever it may be. It is in *The Self-interpreting Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments. By the late Reverend John Brown, Minister of the Gospel at Haddington, a folio "Bound and sold by Thomas Allen, 12 Queen Street, New-York," published in 1792.* An autograph on the flyleaf lets one know that the book was the property of "Mary Ellis, August 12, 1793." The covers are in red, with a colonial pastoral oval frame of light lines gilt inclosing an urn decked with flowers. The back is inlaid with green and



Bound by the Club Bindery.



— 1 —





Lining, Plantin and the Plantin-Moretus Museum.

yellow panels. The art is old, naive, exquisite.

It makes startling the comparison of the covers made by the Club Bindery for the Grolier Club's edition of Theo. L. DeVinne's *Christopher Plantin and the Plantin-Moretus Museum at Antwerp*. These covers are brown with interlacing red lines, four circles of blue, Aldine flowers, an oval frame of red, lined with yellow bordered by brown and gilt leaves and inlaid with a medallion of brown. A marginal note in pencil refers to this line of the text, "Not so large as Paris or London, Antwerp," and says, "Nearly twice as large as London, in 1550. See Motley."

The Grolier Club's *Areopagitica, a Speech of Mr. John Milton for the Liberty of Unlicensed Printing to the Parliament of England, with an Introduction by James Russell Lowell*, is bound by Curtis Walters in a terracotta color inlaid with red, blue, and green lines of

Byzantine architecture, lined with a mosaic of red and blue squares around a centre medallion of terracotta color and having for end-papers leather impressed with circles of blue and lines of orange. The work is seductively unconventional. And one likes to think of it as of the decorated gate to the garden where books have their Eden.

They have an Inferno. It has been described by two delightful writers. One may see it on the quays of Paris. A gay spring sun illuminates them and their noble horizon of stone. Mists in the sky give to the light of the day the charming mobility of smiles. These rest with joy on the dazzling hats, on the gilded napes, and the clear faces of women. But they mock the dusty books displayed along the parapets. They reveal ironically these smiles in which nature's youth shines, the fate of bad books.



Bound by Curtis Walters.



Lining, *Areopagitica*.

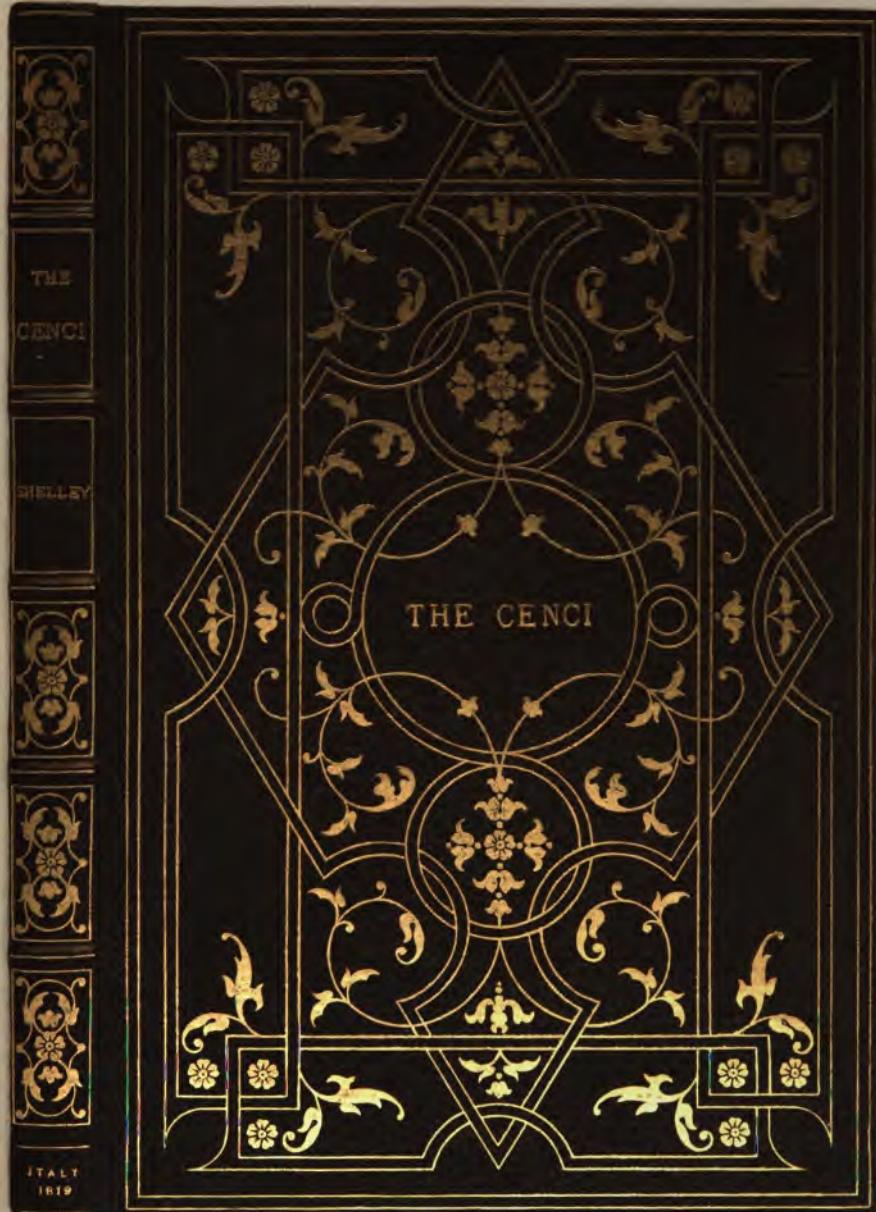
*Books of Love*

Nature in its fine moments, which are scarce, charms one with forms and colors. A book may please one perpetually with little signs of language and nothing more. These evoke in one divine images. It is miraculous. A beautiful verse is a fiddler's bow drawn across one's sonorous fibres. The poet causes to sing in his reader the latter's thoughts, not the poet's. If he speak of the woman that he loves to one, it is one's love and sorrow that he awakens delightfully. When he is understood, the one that understands him is a poet as well as he. Be persuaded that two persons in the world do not understand him in the same way.

Every person sees the poets in his own version. They write of themselves. The best of them are egoists. And yet each reader

finds in them only his own mind. It is a happy misunderstanding. The poets aid one to love; they have no other use. And how might their delightful vanity be made more splendidly useful? Their stanzas are, like the woman that one loves, the most beautiful that one knows. To force others to confess that the poet or the woman that one prefers is incomparable is knight-errantry, not wisdom. Shelley had his knight-errant among booklovers in Fred. If I gave his family name bookmen would not recognize him. He told me that Shelley was greater than Shakespeare, and I knew that it would be vain to try to disabuse him.

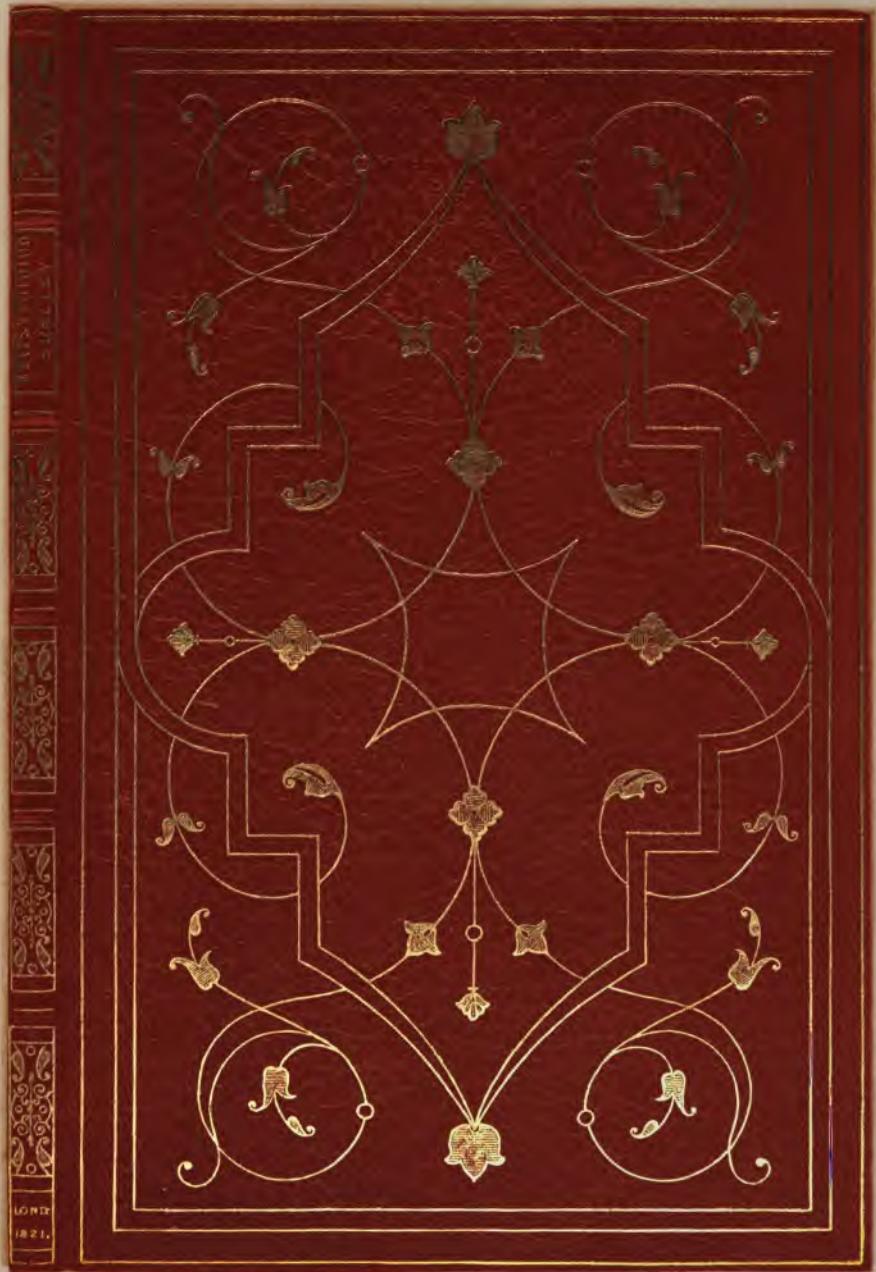
For a book, a signature, a portrait, a relic of Shelley, Fred would have given years of his life and great piles of his wealth. He gave them. A merchant, he quitted business because it brought to him money instead of Shelleyiana. He went from bookshop to



Bound by William Matthews.



— 1 —



Bound by Alfred Matthews.



bookshop, from auction-sale to auction-sale, from catalogue to catalogue, finding works of Shelley and works about Shelley. Oh, how picturesque was the figure of Fred, vigorous and disdainful of dress, smiling in his long gray beard at a treasure-trove! To see one and not think of him is impossible to me, and this one is Shelley's *The Cenci, a Tragedy in Five Acts*, 1819, with leaves uncut. It is bound by William Matthews.

It is in the color of seal, with interlaced gilt lines and flowers, and wears in the middle of the front cover in gilt letters the title "The Cenci." As Fred could not have failed to declaim with unction the last lines of the book's dedication to Leigh Hunt, I write them here to recall for an instant the memory of the good booklover's voice: "In that patient and irreconcilable enmity with domestic and political tyrrany and imposture which the tenor of your life has illustrated

and which, had I health and talents, should illuminate mine, let us, comforting each other in our task, live and die."

Another work of Shelley is *Epipsychedion, Verses Addressed to the Noble and Unfortunate Lady Emilia V... Now Imprisoned in the Convent of . . .*, 1821, with original wrapper and leaves uncut. It is bound by Alfred Matthews in red, with gilt lines, arabesques, and, in the middle of the front cover, flowers delicate as those that are made to apply their light tracery of green and Etruscan-red to the glazed window-panes of Desdemona's palace at Venice.

William Loring Andrews's *Gossip About Book-Collecting*, the paper covers of which are Persian,—I do not know why, if not because the author has in his love of books the tenderness of Hafiz,—is bound by Stikeman in blue with corners and centre in red inlaid with a three-leaved figure in blue,

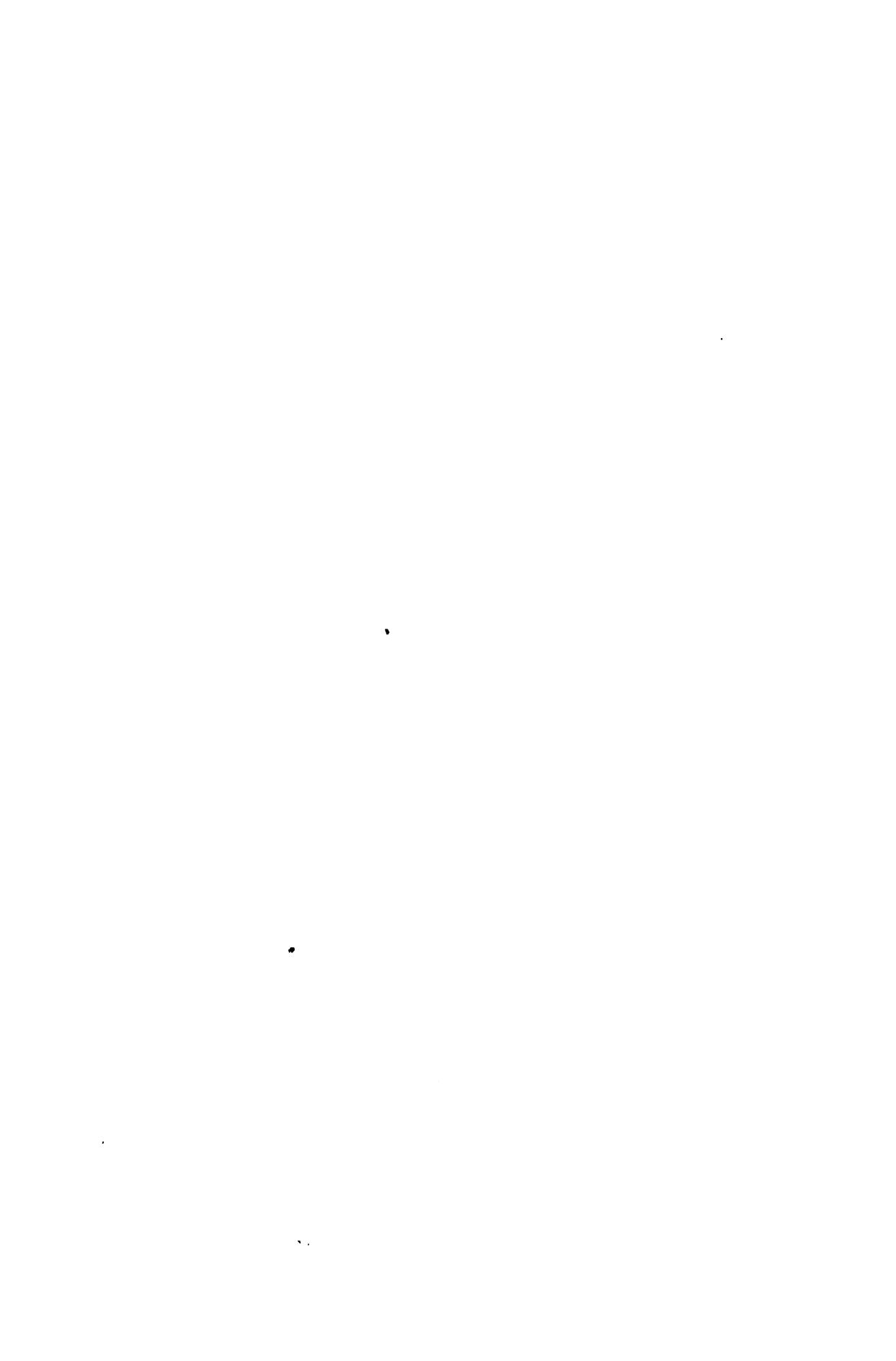


Bound by Stikeman.



Lining, *Gossip About Book-Collecting.*









Lining, *A Trio of XVIII. Century French Engravers.*

lined with light blue inlaid with red in designs of the Shah's enamelled vases and jewel-caskets.

The same author's *A Trio of Eighteenth Century French Engravers of Portraits in Miniature*, 1899, is in brown with Aldine azured flowers gilt, lined in Egyptian flowers orange and blue inlaid, by Toof. The book, inscribed to the Society of Iconophiles of New-York, shows in clear pictures the delicacy of lines and subtlety of color of the works of Ficquet, Savart, and Grateloup. Their minute grace is of an exquisite age. Their Academic precision was not vain. It made acute the originality of an epoch. In them the Classicism of the Pretty has its effect defined imperiously. Mr. Andrews is sensitive to the attraction of art exercised in littleness.

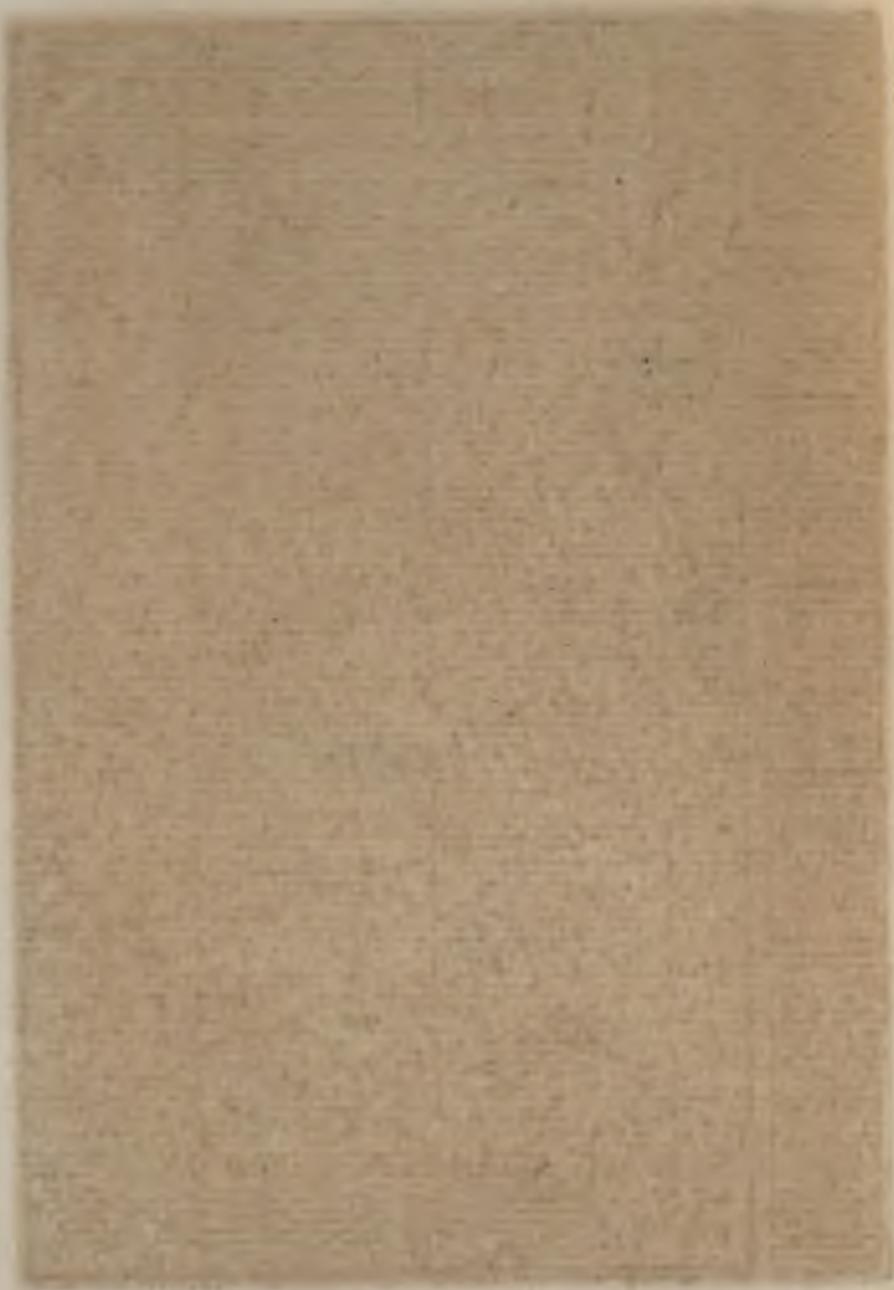
His *Sextodecimos et Infra*, 1899, attests again that sensitiveness. This book, which reviews the miniatures of typography, is in

Magenta-red covered with gilt sprays and flowers, lined in green bordered in red gilt with leaves in vines, by Toof. The same author's *Jean Grolier de Servier*, 1892, is in olive-green inlaid with orange interlacing lines and gilt Aldine flowers, lined in red with a border of gilt azured flowers, by the Club Bindery. I think that the success of this pretty book gave to Mr. Andrews the ardor to write of the other preferences of his taste as a booklover, of Roger Payne and Bradford, of antique folios and American images.

If it had been less successful he should have thought that he was alone, and it is not for booklovers to live alone. They have a deal of tenderness. They need, like us, to be admired and loved. Their pride erated by littude, and when they are d to t v sing false. Disdain is p ers and to men of o it is only a grimace.



Bound by Toof.

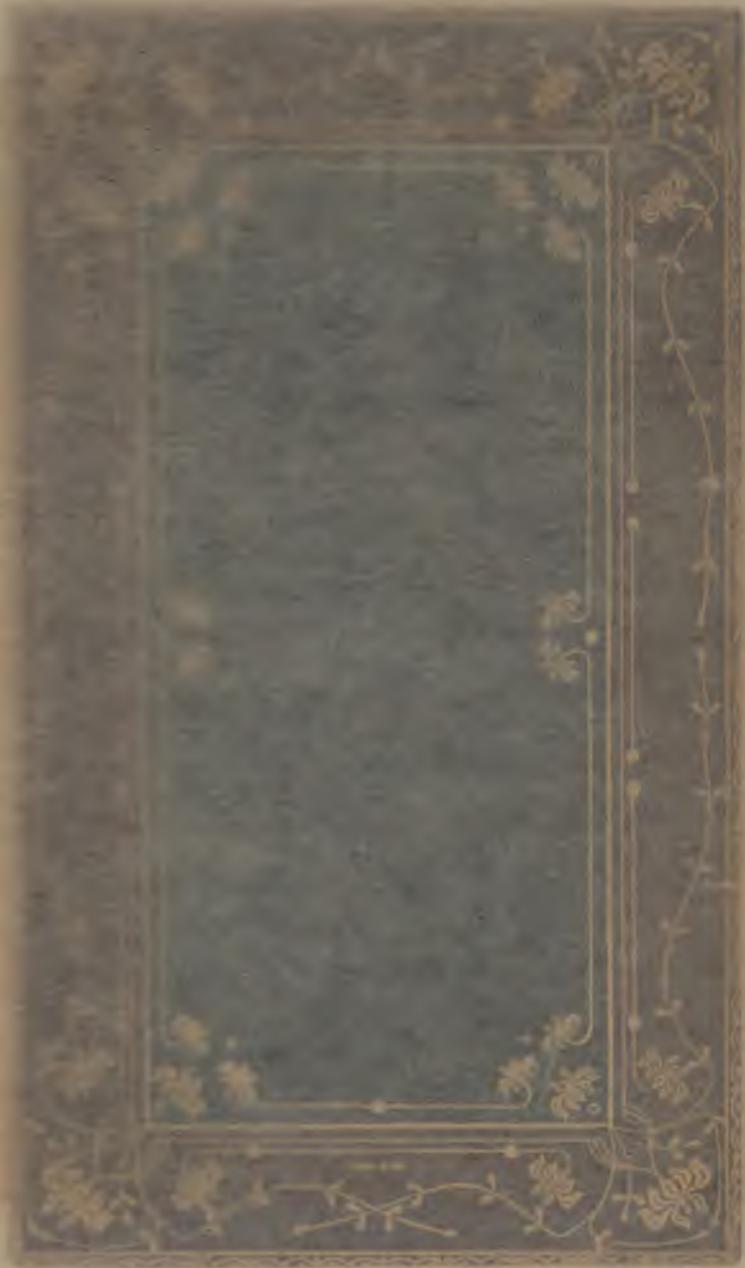






Lining, *Sextodecimos et Infra.*





Lining, *Sextodecimos et Infra.*



Bound by the Club Bindery.





Bound by the Club Bindery.



Grolier's device was not an affectation. His books were "for Grolier and his friends," literally. So are those of Mr. Andrews. He makes the men of his inclination share with him, and this is why his love for them is so beautiful and why the pages in which he has expressed it are treasured.

His essay *Among My Books*, 1894, is in olive-green with a variation of the Du Seuil pattern in gilt lines curved at the sides and ornamented at the corners with formal bouquets, lined with red bordered in gilt lace, by the Club Bindery. Title-pages, texts, portraits, illustrate the book with quaintness. One quits it with the impression of having breathed the flower that has dried for centuries in the manuscripts of the men of the Renaissance that loved antique-letters with living love and found in the dust of the past sparks of eternal beauty. Happy is Mr. Andrews to be of this epoch and lead the exquisite life of the old humanists!

They knew nothing more amusing than to talk of books. Their conversation was an enchantment. Young men listened to it at the libraries where they met to form a magic circle as often as possible. Young men did not understand always everything that was said. But young men do not have to understand, in order to admire, everything. They felt that the humanists were in possession of the beautiful and the good. It was not an illusion. The humanists knew how to love. It is a secret that the booklovers guard jealously. It makes their youth last as long as their loves. It makes them familiar with all things, even with meditation. Those who know them well know that they have traits of the dreamers. But they dream quickly. They have the genius of promptness. Their faculty to think is prodigious. They understand all things at once and are ever reasonable.

*Books of Joy*

In a library varied and abundant as is that of Mr. Poor, the thought comes to one of being at sea. It is the Mediterranean, the cup of Homer, since minds are fed on the classics. There the subtle Ulysses had his misadventures. They are inevitable. How may one escape them? There the master of an African barque heard voices in the dark, and one of them, calling his name, said to him, "The Great Pan is dead! Go thou among men and tell them that the Great Pan is dead!" This was in the first centuries of the era when the reign of saintly nature came to an end, when the reign of cruel asceticism began. To return to the light and the gayety that have been banished, what may one do if not delve in books? They have not the perfidy of the sea's blue waves.

Books reflect the temper of those who read them. Books give to one what one asks of them. The first edition of the *Rubáiyát of Omar Khayyám, the Astronomer Poet of Persia, Translated into English Verse*, London, Quaritch, 1859, is in blue mantled with orange in Persian design, lined with orange paneled with blue at the corners and in the centre, by the Club Bindery. The original paper covers of the book are enclosed. They were not attractive. Quaritch loved books, but, amazingly, he had no art. He gave to Fitzgerald's masterpiece of poetic translation the aspect of the bookseller's catalogues. It is not odd that it should have passed unremarked for years and years. The world might not be deceived in the same manner now when the manner has little chance of being imitated.

We have lost insularity. We appreciate the most diverse things, even the things that are



Bound by the Club Bindery.





Bound by the Club Bindery.



radically opposed to our manners and our philosophy. Do we not like even the Chinese tale of "The Emperor"? On a throne of new gold the Son of Heaven, dazzling with gems, is seated among the mandarins. He is similar to a sun surrounded by stars. The mandarins talk gravely of grave things, but the Emperor's thought has fled through the open window. In her pavilion of faience, similar to a bright flower surrounded by leaves the Empress is seated among her maids-in-waiting. She thinks that her beloved stays at his Council too long.

She agitates her fan. A puff of perfume caresses the Emperor's face. "My beloved sends to me," he says to himself, "with a stroke of her fan the fragrance of her mouth." And the Emperor, radiant with gems, walks toward the pavilion of faience, quitting the astonished mandarins to look at one another in silence. Daniel's edition

of *Blake, His Songs of Innocence*, Oxford, Christmas 1893, provokes the idea of a similar naïve grace. It is in the tenor, in the form, in the sentiment, in one knows not what charm of point of view that the Far Eastern tale and the English book are akin. Blake's work is in red bordered with gilt leaves and ornamented in the centre with white inlaid bell-shaped flowers, lined in maroon, by the Club Bindery.

Milton's *Areopagitica*, Grolier Club, 1890, is in dark red covered with inlaid interlacing lines in orange and circles in blue, lined in olive with gilt lines and the Grolier Club's arms, by Smith as forwarder and Mansell as finisher. One has not to compare their work with that of Curtis Walters on another copy of the same edition noticed already.

Moncure Daniel Conway's *Barons of the Potomack and the Rappahannock*, Grolier Club, is in red studded with wreaths encircling



Bound by R. W. Smith; finished by F. Mansell.







Lining, *Barons of the Potomack and the Rappahannock.*

roses and with sprays gilt, lined in blue with the Grolier Club's arms in the centre, by R. W. Smith.

Mosher's edition of *The Germ* of 1850, reprinted in 1898, a copy on vellum, is in blue mantled with lace gilt, lined in vellum bordered with blue, by the Club Bindery. Mr. Poor's library has the original edition of this work the admirable folly of which may not be excelled. With it the ardent young painters, poets, and moralists whose names have attained the highest point in the fame of England's modern art — Ford Madox Brown, Rossetti, Holman Hunt, Coventry Patmore — went bravely to the assault of the academic and the conventional. They were worthy of all praise, but their effort was not logical since it reverted to the models of Ghirlandajo, of Botticelli, of Fra Angelico, that the genius of Raphael effaced as an evolution. *The Germ* has the frail nudity and

the fine thinness of the first Florentine art. Under the dry and acidulated forms of the figures are hidden symbols numerous and complicated. But their idealism is not impulsive; it is studied, therefore perverse.

Daniel's impression at Oxford of *A Royal Guest*, Christmas 1900, is in red with medallions of gilt and crescents of blue, lined with blue inlaid with crescents of red.

Theodore L. De Vinne's *Historic Printing Types*, a lecture before the Grolier Club in January 1885 printed by the Club in 1886, is in olive-green studded with fleurdelys blindtooled and gilt disks in a Du Seuil design, lined with dark brown gilt in the Du Seuil manner with the arms of the Club in the centre, by Smith and Mansell. In Mr. De Vinne's work the lore of Stephanus, of Plantin, of the great printers that were ever revered, is rehearsed with traditional fidelity. The American booklovers owe to him a zeal,



Bound by the Club Bindery.



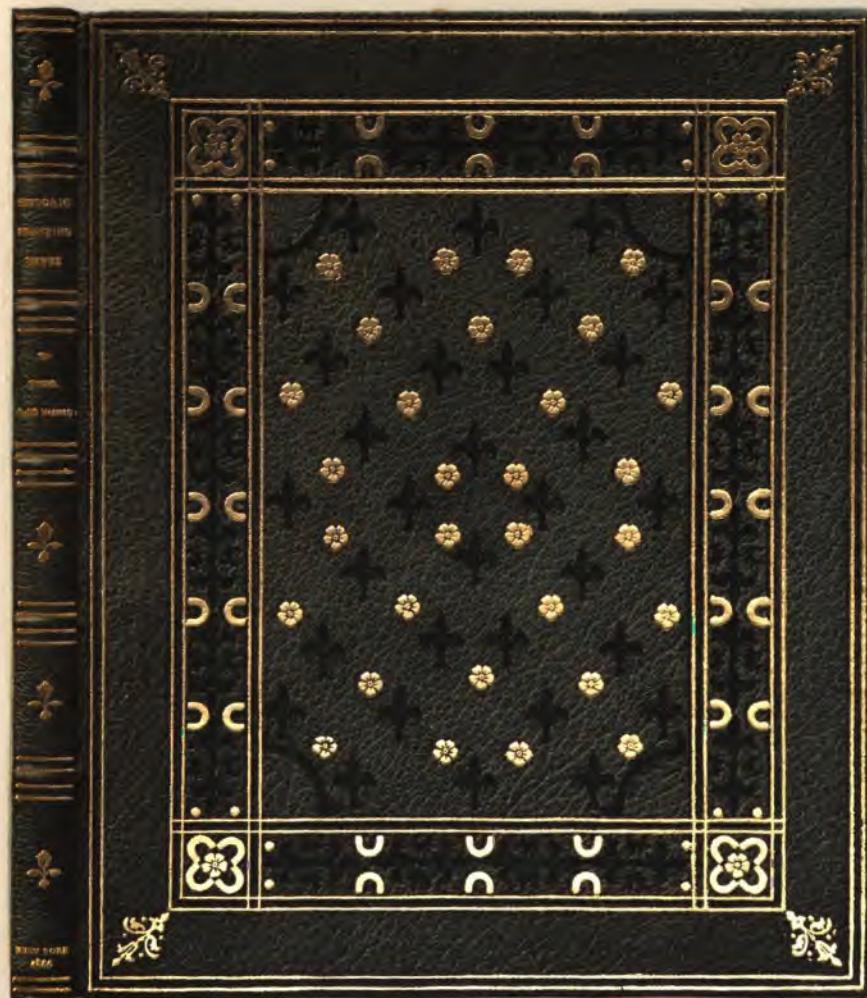


Bound by R. W. Smith; finished by F. Mansell.







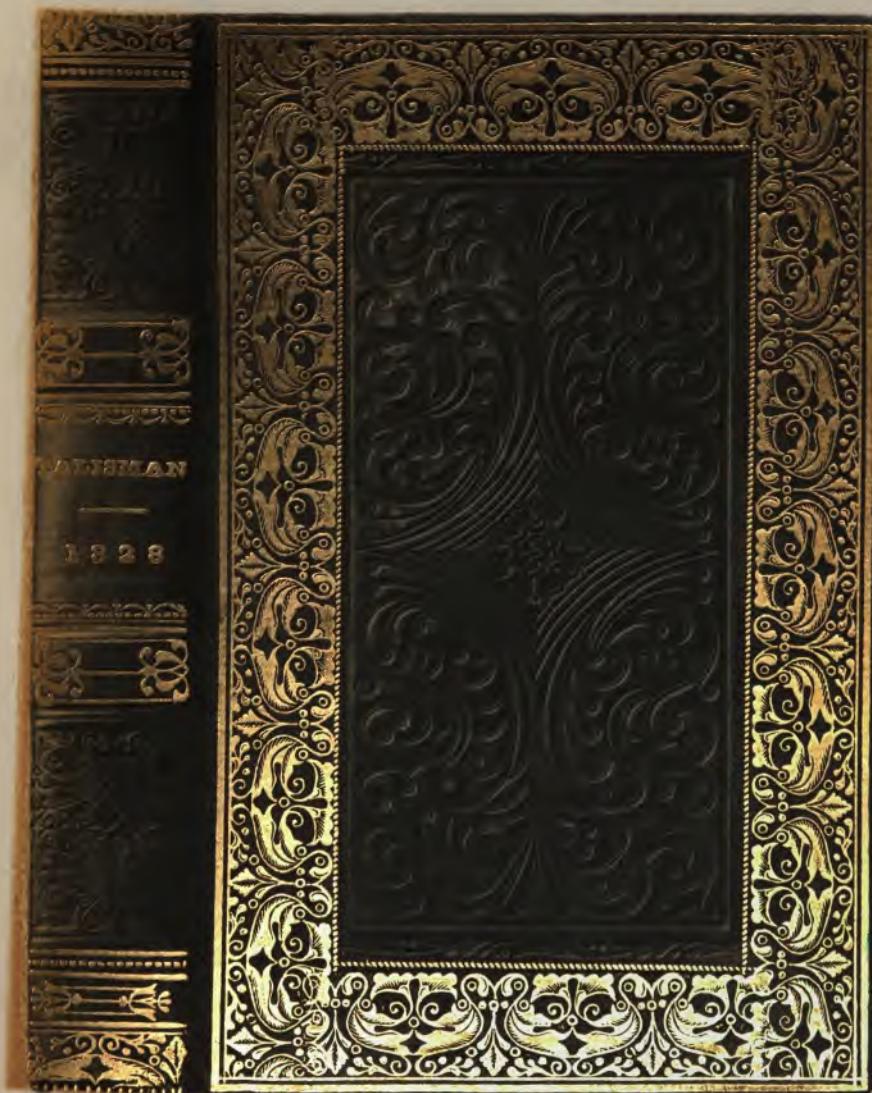


Bound by R. W. Smith; finished by F. Mansell.

*Pages of Lore*

A little book in black calf, gauffered and stamped with a wide gilt border in the style that Bozérian invented, captivates affection. It was published by Elam Bliss, Broadway, New-York, in 1827, and is *The Talisman for 1828*. It has the delicacy of the Keepsakes, the Bijou Almanacs, the Albums, that our grandmothers kept in their lacquered desks with their dearest tokens. We do not know always why our grandmothers liked these little books and why they pressed flowers in them. We say to ourselves that these little books had a merit that the years have effaced. We have another theory.

We think that our grandmothers had more to say to their books than their books had to say to them, and we adopt the idea of a gentle literary critic, of Anatole France, who



Early American Binding.



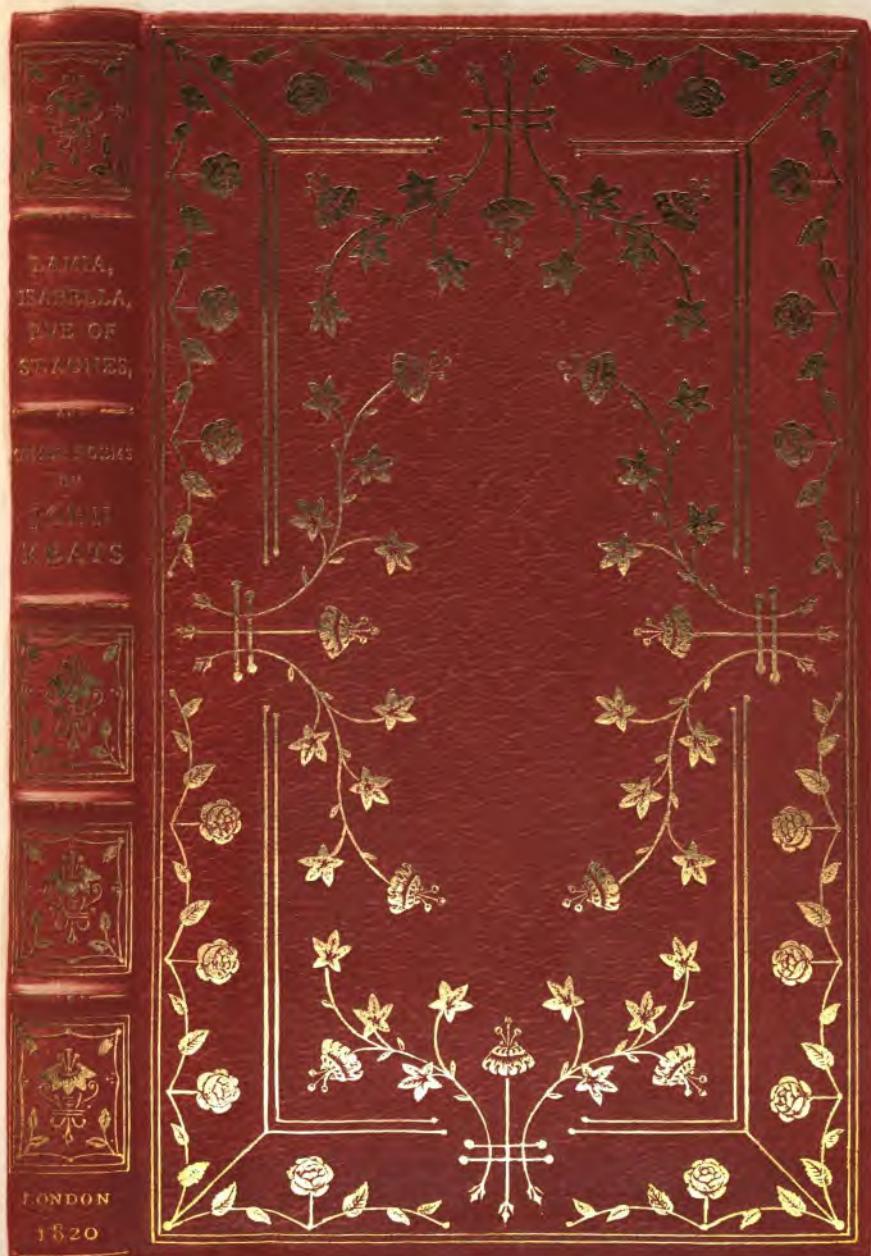
believes that books are like landscapes transformed in all the eyes that see them, in all the minds that conceive them. But *The Talisman for 1828* is so fascinating in form and color that we are sure of a merit in it free of individual opinions. There are order, measure, proportion; there are simple expressions of love<sup>o</sup> of nature and subtle proofs of love of art. The engravings are exquisite.

One is of a column, a vase, a wall, shrubs, birds, designed by Francis Herbert in symbolism of Etruscan antiquities; another, of a "Serenade," designed by S. F. B. Morse in symbolism of all romance and reproduced in mezzotint; others are of Albano's Saviour as a Child, Inman's William Tell, engraved by Asher B. Durand, Morton's Hudson River scene, Neilson's "Devil's Pulpit." And the stories, the essays, the poems, recall to one impressively the bibliographical information that William Cullen Bryant edited *The Talis-*

*man for 1828.* Here appears the gravity allied with tenderness of his genius:

The melancholy days are come, the saddest of the year,  
Of wailing winds and naked woods and meadows brown and sere.  
Heaped in the hollows of the grove the withered leaves lie dead,  
They rustle to the eddying gust and to the rabbit's tread.  
The robin and the wren are flown, and from the shrubs the jay,  
And from the wood tops calls the crow, through all the gloomy day.

Where are the flowers, the fair young flowers, that lately sprung and stood,  
In brighter light and softer airs a beauteous sister-hood?  
Alas! they all are in their graves—the gentle race of flowers  
Are lying in their lowly beds, with the favor and good of ours;  
The rain is falling where they lie—but the cold November rain  
Calls not from out the gloomy earth the lovely ones again.



Bound by Bradstreet's.



Oh, how enchanting New-York would be if *The Talisman for 1828* reflected its temperament of to-day!

F. W. Bourdillon's *Ailes d'Alouette*, printed by H. Daniel at Oxford in 1890, is in blue with a festoon of stars and dots gilt around flowers and stars gilt, lined in dark red with a blue border, by the Club Bindery. The decoration was suggested by the grace of the poem:

The night has a thousand eyes,  
And the day but one;  
Yet the light of the bright world dies  
With the dying sun.  
The mind has a thousand eyes,  
And the heart but one;  
Yet the light of a whole life dies  
When love is done.

*Peg Woffington*, by Charles Reade, Grolier Club, 1887, is in blue with gilt compartments enclosing a flower on its stem with leaves, lined in orange bordered by a gilt

tracery of leaves and the Grolier Club's arms, by R. W. Smith and F. Mansell.

Keats's *Lamia, Isabella, The Eve of St. Agnes, and Other Poems*, London, 1820, is in red with roses and branches gilt, lined in marbleized-paper bordered by roses and leaves gilt, by Bradstreet's.

The same bookbinder has given to Erasmus's *Praise of Folie, Moriae Encomium, a Book made in Latin by that Great Clerke Erasmus, Roterodame, Englished by Sir Thomas Chaloner, Knight, MDXLIX*, printed in London by Thomas Berthelet in 1569, an emblematic aspect. The book is in brown with a square of two lines gilt bordered by lines, leaves, and masks, lined in marbleized-paper with a border of leaves. Simple and precise, the design evokes mysteriously in one's memory the portrait of the philosopher painted by Holbein that is a biography in lines and colors.

*Pages of Fancy*

A little book in calf has on its front cover, in a gilt oval, a sphere, books, an hour-glass, quills, and, in a flash of lightning, the name of America. In the border of the oval, "Prix, Institution de M<sup>d</sup> O'Kill," is inscribed. This example of American bookbinding at its initial effort has the bookbinder's ticket of G. Champley.

The book is *Village Poems*, by Mrs. N. Sproat; New York, Samuel Wood & Sons. The poems are "To Miss M. D., occasioned by the death of a young acquaintance," "To a friend on receiving H. Moore's Practical Piety," "To my Son on his commencing the study of Physic," "To Miss M. L. on her return from visiting a family who had, since she saw them, buried a son and mar-

ried a daughter." The style is faithfully expressed by these lines of one of the poems:

Thou child of my love, though removed from my eyes

Thou art not removed from a mother's fond heart;  
The fair path of duty I still can descry,

And the counsels of prudence with kindness im-  
part.

One has not to envy extremely the student that received as a premium, for good behavior perhaps, this book of poems. It is not captivating. But the young persons of to-day that receive as rewards of merit books of science have not a great advantage. At seven they are obliged to have an opinion on the anæsthetical power of protoxyde of azote.

The men of learning have discovered that fairies are imaginary beings, and one scholar cannot suffer that fairies be talked of to children. He talks to them of coal and gold,



Early American Binding by G. Champlley.



which are not imaginary. Well, fairies exist precisely because they are imaginary. They exist in imaginations naïve and fresh, naturally accessible to the poetry, ever youthful, of popular traditions. The least little book that inspires a poetic idea, that suggests a beautiful sentiment, that moves the mind, in fine, is infinitely better for childhood and youth than innumerable volumes stuffed with mechanical notions. Then, Mrs. Sproat's poems have as a frontispiece a woodcut of romantic woods, grave as the landscapes of Ruysdael.

Holbein's alphabet of the Macabre dance, printed on vellum in 1849, is in pyrographic covers of skulls, cross-bones, and the scene of the murder of Abel, by Pfister. *The Tale of the Emperor Coustans and of Over Sea*, Kelmscott Press, 1894, is in light brown in lozenges enclosing fleurons, without gilt, lined in vellum, by the Club Bindery.

*The Queen Mother. Rosamond. Two Plays*, by Algernon Charles Swinburne, 1860, is in olive-green with inlaid red hearts extended into curved lines interlacing and a tracery of honeysuckle gilt, lined in dark red with a gilt tracery of honeysuckle, by the Club Bindery.

*XXII Ballades in Blue China*, by Andrew Lang, London, 1880, is in blue with gilt fanciful stems and lines evoking visions of China's art of decoration, lined in blue silk with a border of lines, by the Club Bindery. To Théodore de Banville, whose art made modern ancient forms of French poems,—ballades, odes, triolets, rondeaux,—was paid a fine tribute in the charm of Mr. Lang's ballades.

*Notes from a Catalogue of Pamphlets in Worcester College Library*, printed by Daniel at Oxford in 1874, is in blue with gilt lines and ornaments of the Du Seuil style modi-

fied, by Bradstreet's. *Velasquez and his Works*, by William Stirling, London, 1855, is in orange with gilt lines in a square and Du Seuil ornaments modified, by Bradstreet's.

Grave men say that all this richness of decoration in book-covers is absurd; but they have much trouble to admit this, so captivating it is. Let them admit that it is absurd. If it were not absurd it would not be charming. The absurd things are the only agreeable, the only beautiful ones, the only ones that give gracefulness to life. A reasonable poem, statue, or picture would make men yawn.

The Iliad is absurd and the most beautiful poem that one may read; Don Quixote is absurd and the most sympathetic hero that one knows. He was not duped. The only dupes are those who see nothing beautiful, nothing grand. Passions are beautiful and they are absurd. The most beautiful is the

most unreasonable. It is love. Juliet and Romeo have not the least commonsense. They are adorable. A passion less absurd than the others is avarice. It is frightfully ugly.

Critics who crave for the impossible will ask why the artisans of the bookcovers described here have not invented other forms, other figures, have not created images. The imagination that they ask for is not a human faculty. All our ideas come, as Condillac has said, through the senses. Imagination consists not in creating but in assembling ideas. The Greeks saw centaurs, sirens, harpies, because they had seen men, horses, women, fishes, and birds. See the effect of a fine imagination.

Homer causes to emerge from the white sea a young woman, "similar to a mist." She speaks, she complains, with a celestial serenity. "Alas, my child," she says, "why

have I nourished thee? I brought thee into my house for an evil destiny. But I will go to the snowy Olympus. I will go into the bronze home of Zeus and kneel at his feet and, I believe, win his protection." She speaks, she is Thetis, she is a goddess. Nature gave woman, the sea, and the mist; the poet associated them.

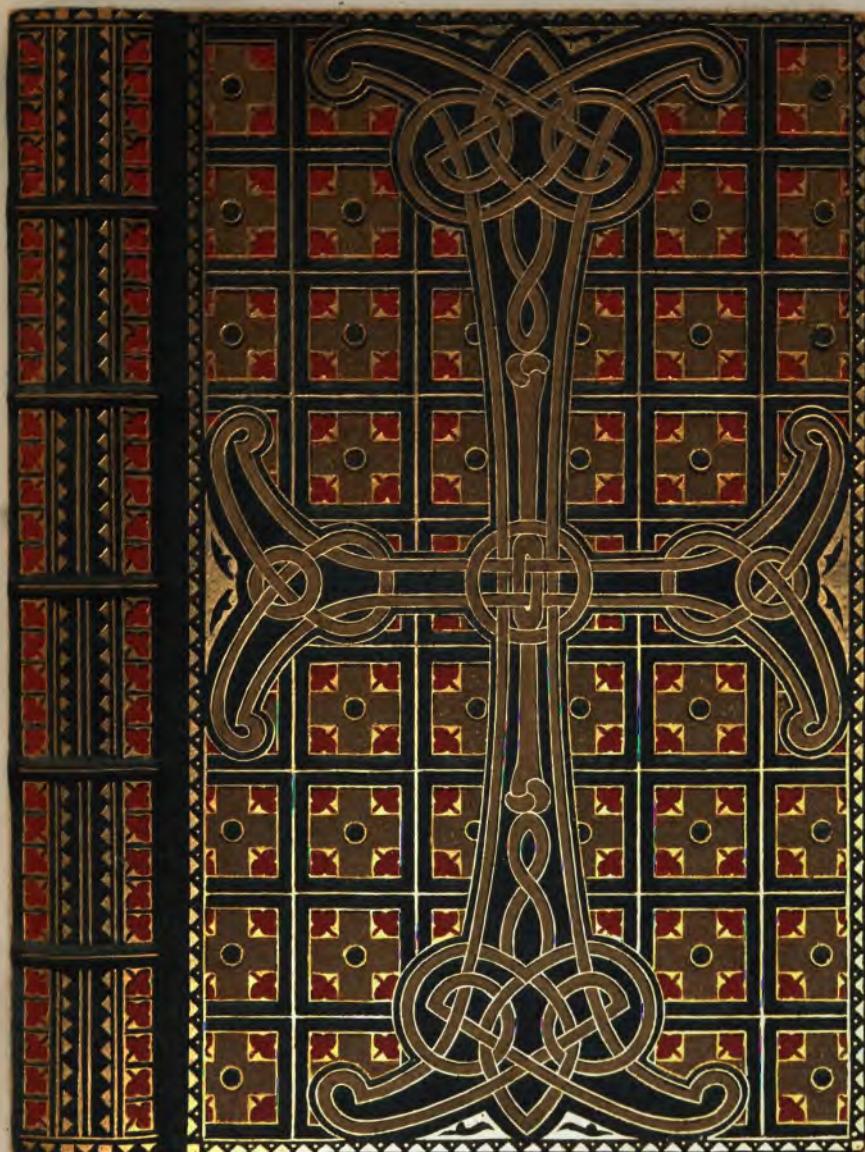
The artistic bookbinders associate with the ideas of the books that they decorate the lines and colors of the tradition of their art since Gutenberg gave to the first book printed with movable types covers of thick oak-boards, a dress of calf-leather stamped, brass corners, and bosses.

The philosophers that dissociate ideas say that the material that might best preserve books should be fragile, easily broken, in order to be of no value if separated from the books. But the philosophers that say this are not booklovers.

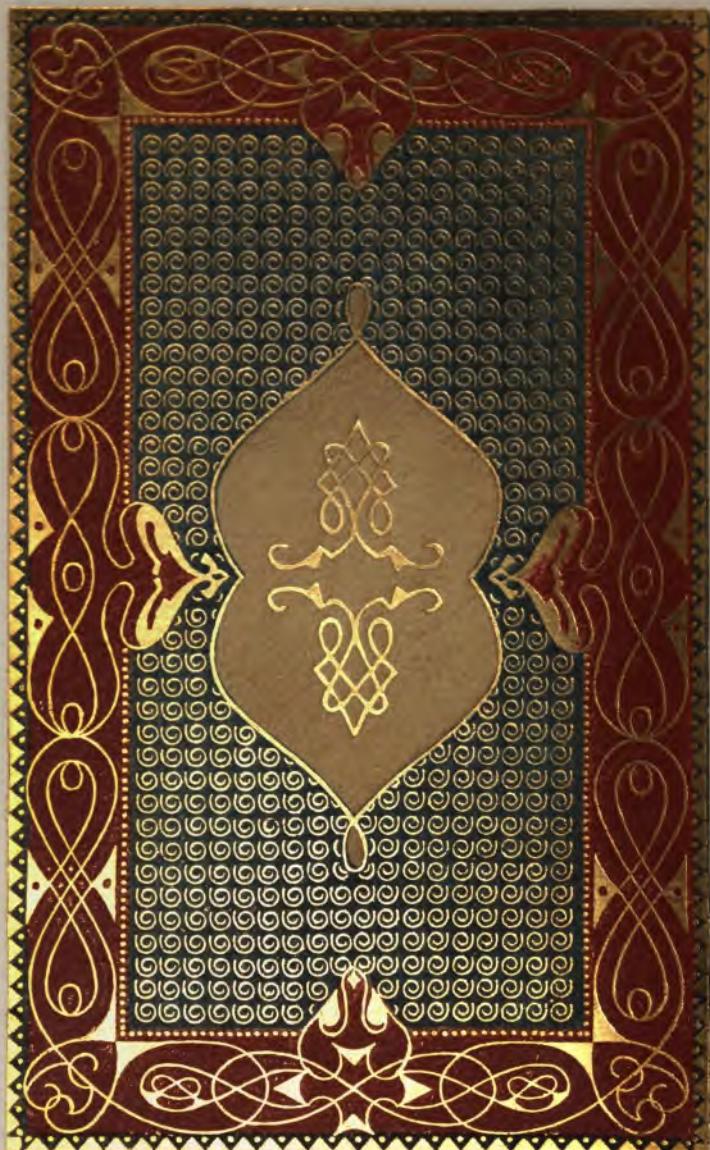
*Pages of Fame*

If a book-binder make a faithful representation of a great book of poems in its covers, his glory interests not directly the public. His glory is made of satisfaction with little and remains indifferent to many. He renounced acclamation and deserves to be guarded against clamor. His work, made for the most delicate critical attention and for the most minute analysis, is not to be offered to common appreciation. It is a rare, exquisite work, and its lovers are to be sought for only among those who have the most refined culture.

One without a refinement almost Byzantine may not know the charm of Tennyson's *Idylls of the King*, 1859, forwarded by the Club Bindery and finished by Mansell. It is in a mosaic of blue lines, orange squares



*Idylls of the King*, Tennyson, 1859.  
Bound by the Club Bindery; finished by  
F. Mansell.



Lining, *Idylls of the King.*

around blue disks, and clover leaves. The cross for which Sir Galahad was chivalrous is inlaid in arabesques of a creamy white on blue. The lining is red. Its border is of curved lines gilt around a blue rectangle with gilt circular ornaments and an inlaid creamy white design with gilt arabesques. The edges are gauffered with delicate tints of red and blue on the gold. The book scintillates thus with gems of the art of decoration. The harmony is varied, the symbolism unexpected, precise, and, also, very personal.

*The Story of Eudocia and her Brothers*, by Richard Watson Dixon, printed by Daniel, 1888, is in dark green with a square of arabesques and flowers around a lyre in orange, lined with orange ornamented at the corners with flowers, by the Club Bindery.

*Herrick, His Christmas*, printed by Daniel at Oxford, is in red with gilt lines and sprays,

lined in green with sprays gilt at the corners, by the same bindery.

*Strafford, an Historical Tragedy*, by Robert Browning, London, 1837, is in brown bordered by gilt lines interlacing with inlaid orange lines, lined in orange with studded gilt roses and sprays at the corners.

W. L. Andrews's *New Amsterdam, New Orange, New York*, a chronologically arranged account of engraved views of the city from the first picture published in 1651 until the year 1800, 1897, is in blue with inlaid white bands, gilt flowers, a brown inner square and circle, a brown border, lined in green with gilt lines and flowers and inlaid white bands at the corners, by the same bindery.

Richard Watson Dixon's *Lyrical Poems*, Daniel, 1887, is in orange, lined in green with a border of lines and flowers not gilt, by the same bindery.

*A Royal Guest*, Oxford, Daniel, Christmas,

1900, is in red studded with gilt ovals and crescent-shaped ornaments inlaid in blue, bordered by red crescent-shaped ornaments, by the same bindery.

*Omphale, Histoire Rococo*, illustrated by Lalauze, is in orange with a frame of lines flowered at the corners, lined in blue with a border of lines and studded with lozenges and flowers, by the same bindery.

*The Poems of John Donne*, from the text of the edition of 1633, revised by James Russell Lowell, with the various renderings of the other editions of the seventeenth century and with a preface, an introduction, and notes by Charles Eliot Norton, Grolier Club, is in compartments of blue with gilt border, gilt lines, and arabesques, and circles of orange outlined with red inlaid, lined with red, by the same bindery.

*Two Note Books of Thomas Carlyle from 23d March, 1822, to 16th May, 1832*, edited by

Charles Eliot Norton, Grolier Club, 1898, is in brown with a gilt border of curves, lines, baskets of flowers, and birds, lined in red bordered by gilt lines plain and dotted, by the same bindery.

*Essays from the Guardian*, by Walter Pater, printed for private circulation at the Chiswick Press in 1896, is in brown with chrysanthemums and curved lines gilt, by Toof.

By Toof also is Justin Huntly McCarthy's translation of the *Rubáiyát*, 1889, in green inlaid with a red heart in a creamy white rose, surmounted by a gilt rose in a fawn fantastic design, with grapes inlaid in red and vine leaves, lined in green with lines of vines and bunches of grapes. Toof's symbolism is too obvious to be agreeable. His workmanship has faults that are to vanish when it shall have gained simplicity.

Byron's *Don Juan*, 1819, is in green with a gilt rectangle of a novel Du Seuil design,

having between its double lines a compartment of gilt medallions, by Bradstreet's.

*The Luck of Roaring Camp and Other Sketches*, by Francis Bret Harte, Boston, 1870, is in red with gilt lines in border, by the same bindery.

Books are magic illusions. One finds in them the figurative appearances of one's thoughts. It is admirable to give to book-covers the simplicity, the luxury, and all the charm of costumes. It is admirable also to give to them masks. A personage of the Italian Comedy says that he attends the festivals of life in a travesty in order the better to pay homage to them.

There are books to be dressed in Jansenist covers with dazzling linings. They give the impression of gravity. One opens them and they are startling in their gayety. There was melancholy, there is all the joy of jewels and flowers in a saraband.

*Sages in Pages*

A nobleman of the reign of Elizabeth wished that his books were all well bound and talked of love. Shakespeare has made of this wish an imperishable verse. The new books of England and of France were clothed then in splendor. Their covers were in compartments heavy with flowers and devices in the fashion of the Renaissance. These covers protected, while they glorified, pages of poems and essays. Now the public wants the new books to talk of love, but does not ask that they shall be well bound. Why should the public care? No one rereads, no one thinks of rereading, the new novels. The most lovable among them last a day.

Novels pass like flowers. Something of them remains, I know. But the readers of novels are impatient, frivolous, and forgetful.

The reason is that they are women. It is to women that the spirit and the fashion of novels are due, for literature is a work of the public as well as of authors. The new novelists write, often without knowing it, what is agreeable to women. They write too voluminously, I think. It is excessive pretentiousness to impose upon one's readers a book of three hundred and fifty pages. An exquisite short-story is more pleasant to the delicate.

It falls better into the covers that the nobleman of the reign of Elizabeth wished for his books. It has a better chance to be admired for a long time. A book must be light to be carried through the ages. It must not be long to be entirely attractive to the modern woman that leisure has formed. I am sure that a book written about them, hence reflecting them, would be greatly valuable. They are so rare that, numerically,

they do not count. But we see only them, because they are on the surface of society as a silvery foam.

They are the dazzling crest of the deep human wave. Their necessary and futile function is to make an appearance. It is for them that innumerable industries, the works of which are flowers of human labor, are exercised. It is to ornament their beauty that thousands of workingmen weave precious stuffs, chisel gold, and cut precious stones. They serve society by the effect of the solidarity that unites all beings. They are works of art, and for this deserve the respect of all lovers of form and of poetry. But they are apart. Their manners are particular and have nothing in common with the simpler manners of the human multitude.

If the writers of new novels deigned to make of the modern women the little book that they inspire, and made of it a work of

art similar to them, it would take a place at once in the booklover's library. I do not say that the merit that this distinction implied would be everything. But I know that it would be a real merit. Sages, let your books be in a small number of pages! The sage is polite when he is brief. A short-story may contain a great deal of sense in a few words. A short-story well written is elixir and quintessence. It is a precious unguent.

Balzac is admirable infinitely. He is the greatest historian of his country. It lives entirely in his immense work. But the booklover prefers, rather than Balzac's *Cousine Bette* and *Père Goriot*, one of his short-stories, the *Grenadière* for example, or the *Femme Abandonnée*. His short-stories are more artistic.

*Images in Pages*

Thus, art of bookbinding leads one into criticism of literature. The art of bookbinding leads one at once into criticism of the size of books. Then there is criticism also of their literary style. They are not to be in quality of paper, in type and ornaments, heavy. They are to be works of art in literary style to inspire works of art in bookbinding. This condition is imperative enough to be, in the booklover's point of view, absolute.

He knows that there is a literature without style, even as there are roads without grass, without shade, and without fountains. That literature without style does not interest him. And what is style? Individuality. Buffon said that style is man himself. Hello says that style is inviolable. It is as personal

as the color of the eyes or the sound of the voice. One may learn to write, one may not learn to have a style. One may not dye one's style as one may dye one's hair. To have a style is to talk in an inimitable way the language of all. Study the mechanism of a style, distil it, recompose it, and the result resembles a style not better than a rose made of perfumed paper resembles a rose.

In comparison with style, themes are of little importance. Shakespeare invented only his verses and phrases. Their novelty gave life to the personages of his dramas. If *Hamlet* had been versified by Marlowe it would have been an obscure tragedy. If style did not exist everything would have been said in the first century of literature. Man is to be regarded with reference to other men, to women, to the infinite, to God or Nature. A work of literature enters necessarily into these four orders. But if

writers had only one theme, and this theme were *Daphnis and Chloë*, it would be sufficient.

Style varies it infinitely. If a book lack style it lacks everything. Is style the art of appreciating the value of words and of their relation to one another, as the teachers of the art of writing think? No, for words may be combined skillfully to evoke life and the combination be inert. Criticism of style must begin with criticism of interior vision, with an essay on the formation of images. The art of writing is the art of feeling, the art of seeing, the art of hearing, the art of using all the senses really or imaginatively. But the world of sensations and the world of words are separate. They come into an accord badly, indifferently, no one knows how in advance.

Some writers have a visual, others a verbal memory. The former, describing images

directly, have a better chance to be individual than the latter, describing images through descriptions which they have read. Verbalism is the gravest fault of books written without literature. The analogous fault in art of bookbinding is fidelity to historical styles of bookbinding. The artisan imagines his work in the Harleian, the Grolier, the Du Seuil, the Roger Payne style, instead of imagining it in his own style. He imitates instead of inventing. Models weigh upon him. It is not the booklover's fault if the bookbinders of his library were not always individual.

It was the fault of the bookbinders. It was the fault of the books themselves. The books had not in their style the faculty to provoke ideas of decoration. And they are in his library adversely criticised by their covers.

## *Homage in Pages*

American bookbinders had in 1824 a brief manual. It was published then by Peter Cotton at Richmond. Its title was *The Whole Art of Bookbinding, Containing Valuable Receipts for Sprinkling, Marbling, Coloring, &c.* Its title-page said that it was "The first American, from the third London, edition with considerable additions." And it was initial in its simplicity. If one had to depend upon it one got only what was due to one, the notion of how leaves are sewn together in boards, covered with leather and gilt. The book was not to form searchers for the exquisite and the rare in art of book-binding, but efficient workmen. It had not the faintest trace of the lore that fills now the least pretentious of text-books. The author said:

“The paucity of information on the subject, the want of a regular method, together with the ignorance which too generally prevails with respect to colouring, have been the sole motives that have induced the author to publish this work, confident as he is that every receipt will have its proper effect even upon the first attempt.”

His practical ability was not extraordinary but it was adequate, and his faculty to convey the lessons of his experiences was not despicable. But he had not an idea of the lives that the cult of books consoles for all painful realities. One may not insert in this manual of bookbinding the picture full of profound fantasy and of strange poetry wherein Gustave Doré symbolized the entire race of bibliomaniacs. It is a picture not larger than the hollow of one's hand, but to see it once is to have it in one's memory forever.

. It is printed in a series of caricatures of

the Crimean war gathered under the title of *La Sainte Russie*, and it represents a monk named Nestor in his cell with his books and papers. His head is almost hidden in a hood. He is bent upon a table and he is writing. Around him the country is the prey of massacre and arson. Arrows darken the air. Nestor's convent is so furiously assaulted that the walls crumble. The good monk writes. His cell, spared by a miracle, is hooked to a gargoyle as a cage is to a window. Archers crowd what remains of the roofs, walk like flies along the walls, and fall like hail on the ground bristling with lances and swords. They are fighting in the chimney. He writes. A terrible commotion overturns his inkstand. He writes still. This is what comes of living among books! This is the power of the art of bookbinding! I am sure that the Adams Bindery knows it well.

It has given to *Lyra Elegantiarum, A*



Bound by the Adams Bindery.



*Collection of the Best Specimens of Vers de Société and Vers d'Occasion in the English Language, By Deceased Authors*, edited by Frederick Locker, London, Moxon, 1867, covers which make their pride of a method of inlaying simply. It is named "Viennese inlay," and its characteristic is to be a mosaic rather than an inlay. It inlays to the boards. The book is in green with red lines and hearts at the sides and angles, lined in brown with green and red ornaments. The effect is not different from that of the inlay that is not Viennese. Even if the handicraft of the Adams Bindery were excellent it could not owe anything for this excellence to its method of inlaying. This has not a special merit. But it has the charm that inutility lends to things. One likes it as a form of expression of art for art's sake. There is an antithesis to the manual of bookbinding published at Baltimore in 1824.

I am glad to finish with the note of it this book, which may not have, in spite of its writer's exercise of will and patience, a value analogous to that of the works of the Florentine goldsmiths that Benvenuto Cellini's art excited in the beautiful days of the Renaissance. Then works were more precious for their ornaments than for the gold and silver in which they were made.

This work is to have no other value than the one that its metals lend. These are the books of the library, their art of bookbinding, the examples of it that Edward Bierstadt has multiplied in admirable engravings, and the exquisite taste of the Marion Press. I have written twelve chapters in deference to the signs of the Zodiac, the Hours in Roman letters on the dial, and the syllables counted in an Alexandrine verse.

*Finis*

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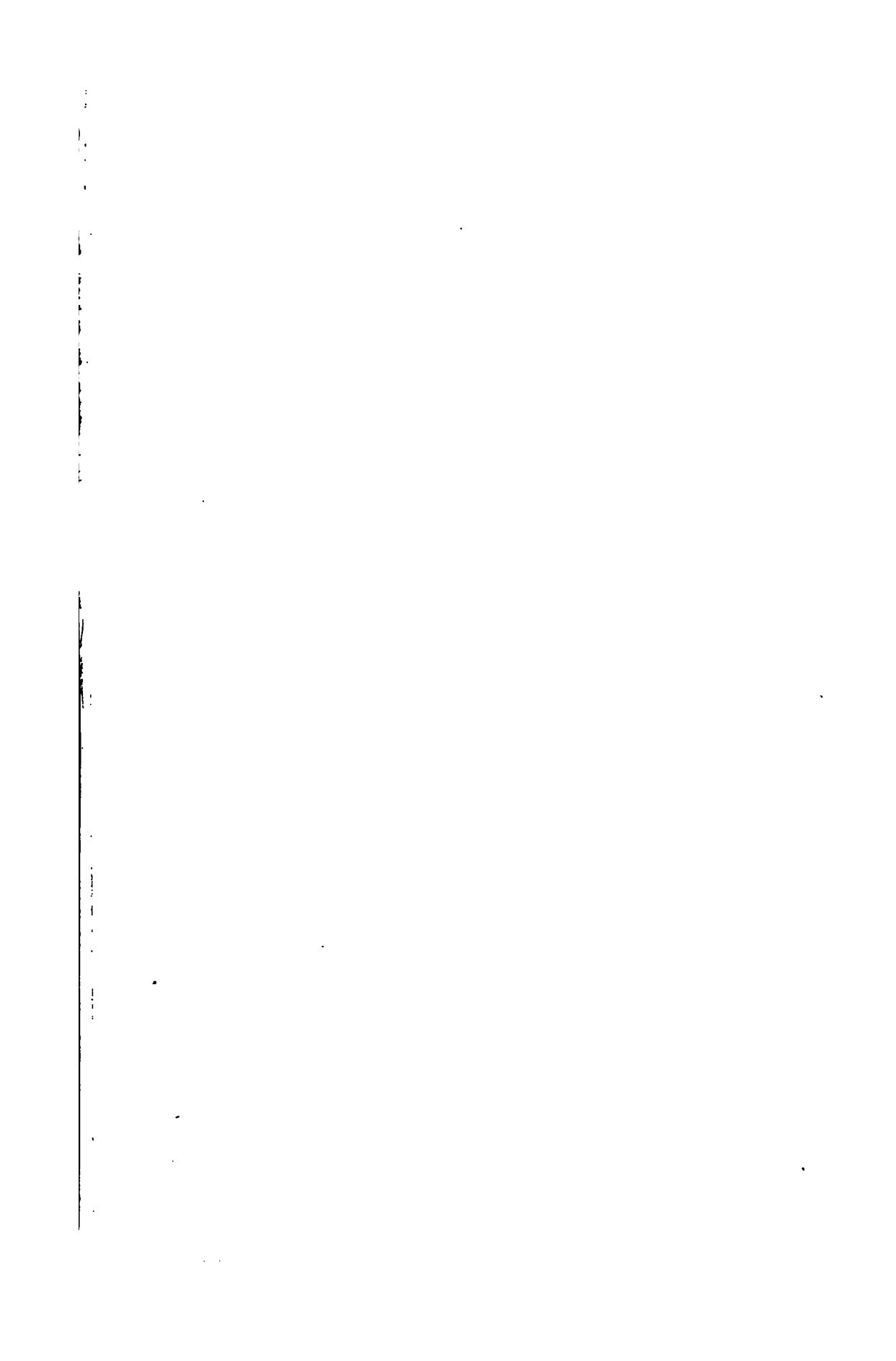
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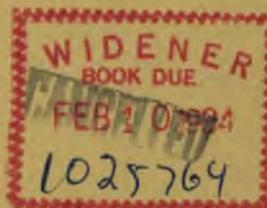








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